



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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610 Philosophy Hall, Columbia University,

New York 27, N. Y.

Vol. XIV, No. 3

September 1954

We editorialize this time on the perplexing matter of eighteenth-century iconography. Nothing can be more puzzling for serious literary scholars, and nothing quite so dangerous for amateurs. Anyone who has had occasion to try to trace the authenticity of an old portrait will know immediately what we are talking about. Catalogues are unreliable; dealers in pictures are notoriously loose in their descriptions, as to subject and painter. Collectors are either overly reticent and uncooperative, or apt to claim too much.

Continually, pictures are offered for sale with wild and eloquent claims and little substantiation. For instance, at Christie's on July 2 there was offered a portrait described as by Reynolds of Dr. Johnson in a brown coat and red vest, with a dog. It turns out that apparently the painting is neither by Reynolds nor of Johnson. Similarly at Sotheby's on July 5 there was included a portrait of James Boswell, full length, holding his hat in one hand and tasseled cane in the other. Yet it appears very unlikely that the subject was really Boswell. And these are only random examples.

What we badly need is more serious research concerning eighteenth-century portraits of literary figures. There is enough to do to keep scores of graduate students busy for years. But let it be understood at the start that it will not be easy for the pioneer. He must combine the patience of Job with the detective gifts of Sherlock Holmes. He will need money to travel and an ingratiating manner. There is no accepted methodology upon which to rely, no hand-books or manuals with expert advice. He will be absolutely on his own. As Bill Wimsatt is demonstrating in his detailed iconography of Pope, the field is wide open and there are thousands of traps for the unwary.

But don't let us discourage you too much. You can have the fun of looking at a lot of pictures and the satisfaction of doing something which is desperately needed and very much worth while.

JOHNSON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

On the week-end of September 18 Johnsonians the world over gathered to celebrate the 245th anniversary of the Great Cham's birth. In Oslo, Buenos Aires, and Lichfield there were the customary festivities. Albert Hall Johnson has sent us the program for the supper in Buenos Aires, with the usual long list of toasts and replies. We wish we could have attended.

At Lichfield there was beefsteak and kidney pudding with mushrooms for the guests, and drinks served by attendants in eighteenth-century costume. The President this year, Laurence Meynell, author and critic, proposed the toast to the "Immortal Memory". Responding to the toast to the visitors was Moray McLaren, author of the new Highland Jaunt. So far as we have heard, the only Americans present were W. H. Dewart and his wife. One ingenious suggestion was made by the schoolboy who answered the toast to "Johnson's Old School." In speculating on what progress Johnson might have made in the world today, the speaker supposed that he would have been a star of television, making "Twenty Questions" into "Fifty Answers."

A group of American Johnsonians this year dined on the 17th at the Men's Faculty Club of Columbia University. Bob Metzdorf of Yale was Chairman, and the toast to the "Immortal Memory" was proposed by Charles G. Osgood of Princeton. The main address of the evening was given by Jim Osborn, who described various unpublished manuscripts having to do with Johnson in his predominantly non-Johnsonian collection. The documents themselves were on exhibit in a nearby case. Everything was fresh and exciting -- letters to and from Dr. Burney (from William Bewley, Thomas Twining, and his daughter Susan), containing allusions to the Great Moralist. There were amusing contemporary verses -- "Johnson's Ghost," and one about a contest between Johnson and David Hume to see who would be chosen the devil's secretary. There was the actual copy of Spence's Anecdotes used by Johnson for the Lives of the Poets, with his notations on the end sheets. There was an account of Johnson's conversation with Bruce, the traveller. All in all, it was a delightful talk, full of new anecdotes.

As a keepsake for those attending, Osborn had prepared an interesting pamphlet, Dr. Johnson and the Contrary Converts. Printed here for the first time were various details about James Compton, together with an important letter from Compton to Edmond Malone, recounting a visit to Johnson when he had met John Walker. On this day Johnson was thus able to introduce a convert to Catholicism

to a former Catholic turned Protestant. It was an opportunity which Johnson obviously relished and the story of what happened is a welcome addition to the great treasure-trove of Johnsoniana.

JOHNSON AND BOSWELL NOTES

The Johnson Society of London has announced its program of speakers for the year. The dates and topics are: Oct. 23, W. H. Graham, "Dr. Johnson's Letters"; Nov. 20, William Kent, "Edward Cave, and the Gentleman's Magazine"; Dec. 18, H. J. D. Lemon, "The Eccentric in the Studio: Joseph Nollekens"; Jan. 15, G. W. Daughlish, "Liberty in the Eighteenth Century"; Feb. 19, Leonard H. Brown, "Johnson as Critic and Humanist"; March 19, T. D. Fitzgerald, "Dr. Johnson's Celtic Interests"; April 23, H. A. Morgan, "Johnson and the Art of Biography." The meetings are held at 3 P.M. in the Lecture Gallery, 74 South Audley St., W.1. If any of you are to be in London on any of these dates we are certain that you will be welcomed by the Johnson Society.

We are delighted to hear from A. Lloyd Jones that he is fully recovered from his operation for cataract and able to read once more. He sends word that the rebuilding of St. Clement Danes church is to be started within the next few months. It is to be used as a Commonwealth R.A.F. Church.

We have received a copy of Moray McLaren's The Highland Jaunt, but have not yet had time to read it through. McLaren followed the celebrated travelers through the Hebrides and (from what we have seen) has written a stimulating commentary, full of zest and shrewd analysis. It makes no pretense to scholarship. We hope to have more to say about it another time. Send in your comments.

Here are a few Johnsonian articles: Edward G. Fletcher, "Mrs. Piozzi on Boswell and Johnson's Tour," Texas Studies in English for 1953; James Gray, "Dr. Johnson and the King of Ashbourne (Dr. Taylor)" in University of Toronto Quarterly for April; Sarah F. Adams, "Boswell's Life of Johnson (cancels in a copy of the 1st edition)" Yale Library Gazette for July; Lindsay Fleming, "Dr. Johnson's Use of Authorities in Compiling His Dictionary of the English Language" in N&Q for July and August; Edward A. Bloom, "Dr. Johnson's Landlord (Richard Russell)" in N&Q for August; Alan G. Thomas, "Dr. Johnson and the Book Trade" in the A.B.A. Annual for 1953; C.S.E., "More Oriel Friends of Dr. Johnson" in the Oriel Record for 1954.

ANOTHER NEWS LETTER

Newest member of the growing family of News Letters (we proudly claim to be the ancestor of many of them) is HINL, the History of Ideas News Letter. At present in the planning stage, it will begin publication shortly, with a sample issue to be ready for the M.L.A. meeting in December. The editors are three former pupils of Marjorie Nicolson -- Rosalie Colie (Barnard), Pierre Garai (Columbia) and Samuel Mintz (C.C.N.Y.).

According to the present plan each number will contain a lead article of some 500 to 1000 words by a recognized scholar in the field. In addition there will be documents, letters, source materials difficult to obtain; notes on work in progress and desiderata; notices and reviews of books; abstracts of current articles. The regular subscription price will be \$1 a year (for four issues), but it is hoped also that a number of sustaining members at \$5 will be secured. If you are willing to help in any way, write at once to one of the editors mentioned above.

We welcome HINL, not as a rival, but as a friendly companion, whose province does not necessarily overlap that of JNL. We concentrate, or try to, on Restoration and 18th-century literature in general. HINL will not be confined to any historical period, but will stress the study of the development of ideas in the past, as they have affected literature and thought.

TWO REQUESTS FOR HELP

Bob Schmitz (Washington University) writes that he and Bob Rogers (Illinois) have embarked on a census of Pope's poetical manuscripts. What they hope to prepare is something far more detailed than a mere finding list. They are preparing special blanks to be used in collecting information about physical description, provenience, dates, authority, relation to printed texts, etc. If you have any knowledge of original manuscripts of any of Pope's works, please write at once to R. M. Schmitz, Dept. of English, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo.

Frances S. Fink (104 Clark Rd., Brookline 46, Mass.) writes about a supposed portrait of Chatterton by Gainsborough. Now in California, it was originally owned by E. Naylor. Can any of our readers give further information about the portrait or about former owners?

WIMSATT'S COLLECTED ESSAYS

We are very happy to see in print, in a very attractive volume, sixteen of the critical articles of Bill Wimsatt (Yale). The publisher is the University of Kentucky Press; the price, \$4. It has the rather forbidding title of The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry. All of the essays have previously appeared in periodicals or special volumes, but for this reprinting have been carefully revised, some extensively. They are divided into groups, one having to do with what Wimsatt considers false approaches (the intentional fallacy, the affective fallacy, the fallacy of the neoclassic species as exemplified by the Chicago Critics); others, the responsibilities of the critic, problems of structure and style, and the relation of literature to the other arts and to Christian religious tradition.

Particularly pertinent for JNL readers are two on the poetry of Alexander Pope -- the very valuable "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason" and "Rhetoric and Poems." Yet others on more general topics will be just as stimulating whether you agree or disagree with his point of view. They are serious, closely-reasoned discussions of vital critical problems, which deserve a wider audience.

We wish other publishers had the wisdom and the adventurous spirit of the University of Kentucky Press, for we badly need similar volumes of collected essays from the periodicals. It takes nerve, considering present publishing costs, to go ahead with the important task of gathering these pieces into hard-covers. So many congratulations to all those involved in the present gamble! May there be many more like you! And in order to encourage others, we hope Wimsatt's collection will sell like hot cakes.

AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY THEATRE IN SWEDEN

We are indebted to Henry Wells for the following description: "If Friar Bacon's glass, as imagined by Robert Greene, is allowed a symbolical meaning, it can be taken to signify the theatre itself, mirror of things past, present and future. Insofar as the theatre reflects the past, it nowhere shows a clearer image than in the theatre at Drottningholm, Sweden. For here it is not only true that more of the eighteenth century is admirably preserved but, with a Swedish talent for perfectionism, more is successfully

recreated than in almost any place which may be found. The bare fact that Professor Beijer uncovered this theatre some twenty-five years ago, along with the smaller but comparable court theatre at Gripsholm, is, perhaps, sufficiently well known to scholars; but the scrupulous care and refined artistry that not only recovers but reanimates Drottningholm must be carefully examined at first hand to be appreciated at anything approaching its worth.

"Here are preserved virtually in their unfaded splendor many stage sets and costumes; the theatre itself is completely intact, its elaborate machinery all functioning. A generation ago one of the Swedish princes occasionally visited the neglected building to borrow bits of rope for his yacht. Otherwise everything remains accounted for, even to furnishings for the dancers' dressing-rooms. Dr. Hilleström, the master of ceremonies, himself a descendent of the celebrated court and theatrical painter of that name, remarked to the present writer: 'how lucky that our theatre was not discovered thirty years earlier in the period of the reconstructionists!' It has been treated with reverence; it looks as fresh as the face of Brünhild after her long sleep.

"Here one sees in summertime spirited productions of the operas and ballets for which the original sets and even costumes are used. Gluck's Orfeo, for instance, can be raised fresh from the abyss. Juan may fall gracefully into his original hell. Cupid descends from clouds ready to be lowered at any moment during this considerable passage of time. Waves of a practicable ocean nearly two centuries old magnificently roll. A chamber orchestra in eighteenth-century dress and using old instruments - Mozart's elsewhere almost forgotten posthorn, for example - plays in an atmosphere wholly agreeable. Candlelight is at least admirably simulated. The custodians have undeniably dusted the decorations; but if regilding has been done, it has been executed modestly and without the slightest distortions of the original conception. All this seems as natural as for one Hilleström to follow another. In the cool Swedish air, resting, one fancies, through the long winter darkneses the rococo age is rendered not as a wax model or a museum piece, but as a warm reality. Elsewhere we study the eighteenth century, but here we breathe it.

"Drottningholm, then, repays the journey from any distance. But the Drottningholm Theatre Museum has copious materials readily transported. Although functioning on the principle that time ends in 1792 with the violent death of Gustavus III, who built its

theatre, it is nevertheless generously and, one may almost say, posthumously, sending an impressive exhibit illustrating both the Drottningholm and Gripsholm theatres to the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum, at Columbia University, for display in the early spring of 1955. Here those of you who cannot make a pilgrimage to Sweden may at least see something of this wonderful restoration.

SOME NEW BOOKS

We have just secured a copy of Gilbert Highet's Juvenal the Satirist (Clarendon), which will be a valuable background tool for all who are interested in eighteenth-century satire. In several places (as usual, we dipped in first through the index) he compares Juvenal to Dr. Johnson, and we can't resist quoting one short passage: "for all their differences, I imagine that the great ungainly Tory, so cruel and rude and yet so soft-hearted, so combative towards the strong and so gentle to the weak, so deeply devoted to literature and such a keen observer of life, so widely wandered, from slums to palaces, who suffered so grimly in youth and could never forget it in his later comfort and dignity, must have been very like Juvenal himself."

Another book which reached us just as copy was going to the press is John Traugott's Tristram Shandy's World: Sterne's Philosophical Rhetoric (Univ. of Calif. Press). It is dedicated to Bertrand Bronson. More of this later.

In the series of short pamphlets published for the British Council, entitled "Writers and Their Work," there are two new items which will be heartily welcomed. James Sutherland has provided an admirable account of Defoe; and D. W. Jefferson of Sterne.

The Yale University Press in this country is issuing the new English translations by Lewis May of Paul Hazard's well-known The European Mind and European Thought in the Eighteenth Century. While they contain much shrewd criticism of Continental tendencies, they are certain to annoy specialists in English literature. A Johnsonian will naturally wince when he comes to such a remark as: "Seated in the Cheshire Cheese, drinking his pint of beer, or his glass of port, he [Johnson] delivered himself of his oracles...."

The British Book Center (New York 36, N.Y.) is to issue in this country a new set of volumes called "The Rogues Gallery." The avowed aim of the books is to "bring history down to a private

human plane," and the subjects will be rogues, scalawags, eccentrics, worthies, villains, but no common murderers or brutal robbers. The first of the series is a biography by Jonathan Curling of Edward Wortley Montagu, the erratic son of Lady Mary. Certainly he qualifies for the series. At the age of thirteen he was reputedly living with a "lady of pleasure" and was with difficulty returned to school. If contemporary gossip is all to be believed, his later career was just as startling. There were few dull moments for his biographer to gloss over. Future volumes of the set will tell of the adventures of Dr. Thomas Dover and Thomas Johnstone, the desperate smuggler.

Other books to be listed are: Roland N. Stromberg, Religious Liberalism in Eighteenth Century England (O.U.P.); W. R. Ward, The English Land Tax in the Eighteenth Century (O.U.P.); A. J. Bourde, The Influence of England in the French Agronomes (Cambridge); Bernard Mandeville, A Letter to Dion, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (Univ. of Liverpool Reprints); George May, Diderot et "La Religieuse" (Yale); J. Holly Hanford, A Restoration Reader (Bobbs Merrill).

RECENT ARTICLES

There are three articles concerned with Swift: Clarence L. Kuli-sheck, "Swift's Octosyllabics and the Hudibrastic Tradition" in JEGP for July; J. R. Moore, "A Possible Model for the Organization of 'A Tale of a Tub'" in N&Q for July; W. H. Welply, "Jonathan Swift's Chester Relatives" in N&Q for August. Concerned with Pope are: C. M. Lombard, "Pope and Lamartine" in N&Q for July; Benjamin Boyce, "Pope's Yews in Shakespeare's Graveyard" in N&Q for July; Hugo M. Reichard, "The Love Affair in Pope's 'Rape of the Lock'" in PMLA for September.

Others having to do with the early part of the century are: John C. Hodges, "The Library of William Congreve" in the Bulletin of the New York Public Library for August and September; J. R. Moore, "Defoe's Hand in A Journal of the Earl of Marr's Proceedings (1716)" in HLQ for May; William A. Armstrong, "The Acting of Thomas Betterton" in English for Summer 1954; A. R. White, "The Ambiguity of Berkeley's 'Without the Mind'" in Hermathena for May.

A few general articles to be mentioned: George C. Brauer, Jr., "Good Breeding in the Eighteenth Century" in Texas Studies in English (1953); Martin Kallich, "The Argument against the Association of Ideas in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics" in MLQ for June; Paul

Sawyer, "The Seating Capacity and Maximum Receipts of Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre" in N&Q for July; D. L. Hobman, "Letters as Literature" in Quarterly Review for July; Jean H. Hagstrum, "Some Opportunities for Research in Eighteenth Century Literature" in the Newberry Library Bulletin for July (this last contains some valuable suggestions for future projects).

Others hitherto not mentioned are: John F. Fulton, "Gibbon: the Unprofitable Undergraduate" in Books and the Man: ABA Annual for 1953; Geoffrey Marshall, "David Hume and Political Skepticism" in Philosophical Quarterly for July; J. B. Price, "Thomas Chatterton, the Hoaxer" in Contemporary Review for February, 1954; Audrey Jennings, "William Collins's House in Chichester" in N&Q for February; Bertram D. Sarason, "A Sketch of Burke by His Executors" in N&Q for February; Edward A. Bloom, "The Paradox of Samuel Boyse" in N&Q for April; John Eva, "Mrs. Inchbald and Thomas Holcroft in Canterbury 1777" in N&Q for April; V. M. Gilbert, "The Warburton-Edwards Controversy" in N&Q for June and August; Karina Side, "Christopher Smart's Heresy" in MLN for May; David V. Erdman, "Blake and Godwin" in N&Q for February, and "William Blake's Debt to Joel Barlow" in American Literature for March; Edward Hughes, "A Letter to Thomas Wright of Durham [from Cowper]" in Durham University Journal for March; Douglas Hubble, "The Life of the Shawl [information about the Darwin family]" in The Lancet for December 26, 1953; Walter M. Whitehill, "A Franklin Exhibition" in Athenaeum Items: A Library Letter from the Boston Athenaeum for May; Karl F. Thompson, "Poet Thompson of the Navy" in N&Q for July; E. W. Bovill, "William Larkins of Bengal 1755-1800" in N&Q for August.

For those of our readers who enjoy scholarly give-and-take, there is the review of Sir Harold Williams' Sanders Lectures on the text of Gulliver by William B. Todd, together with Williams' reply, in The Library for December 1953.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS

Announcement has just been made that The Grange, Fulham, once the home of Samuel Richardson and Edward Burne-Jones, will not be pulled down to make way for modern flats, but will be preserved.

We are delighted to see the eulogy of the eminent Johnsonian, R. W. Chapman, in the TLS for August 6.

We hear that Sir Harold Williams has received an honorary D. Litt. degree at Durham.

Sadly we record the passing of Raymond Havens, from the start one of our most active and loyal supporters. We will miss his post cards containing comments and valuable suggestions for future numbers.

Ronald S. Crane is to be a visiting professor at Stanford this year.

Further signs of a revival of interest in the Restoration comedy of manners may be seen in the fact that at this moment there are two successful productions in off-Broadway theatres. -- The Way of the World at the Cherry Lane Theatre, and The Clandestine Marriage at the Provincetown Playhouse. We have heard excellent reports on both versions.

J. H. Wilson (Ohio State) keeps steadily at work on his study of "Restoration Acting Methods," and hopes to go to England again in the spring for further research.

The Morgan Library has recently acquired an important early manuscript of the Perrault Fairy Tales. This one is dated 1695, two years before the book was published.

Robert Taylor of New York was the purchaser of the holograph manuscript draft of Sheridan's School for Scandal which was sold at Sotheby's on May 25 last.

JOHNSON ON GARRICK ?

Donald Greene (U. of Calif. at Riverside) makes the following intriguing suggestion: "The relationship between Johnson and Garrick is a fascinating problem in psychology that will probably never be completely resolved but continues to tempt speculation. Is it too far-fetched to find in Johnson's extended diatribe against the French in London some hint of autobiographical reference? In 1738, the Garricks were perhaps the only family of French extraction whom Johnson had ever known; and although he necessarily follows Juvenal in the main features of the satire, it is conceivable that his acquaintance with young Davy may, consciously or unconsciously, have colored his treatment of it.

For instance, line 111, 'Obsequious, artful, voluble, and gay,' is not too close to the original 'Ingenium velox, audacia perdita, sermo promptus': the 'gaiety' that was so conspicuous a part of Garrick's composition (his death "eclipsed the gaiety of nations") is Johnson's addition. And one feels that young Garrick, who had been so applauded in amateur theatricals in Lichfield, could not have read lines 132-135 without wondering uneasily just what his old acquaintance had in mind:

Besides, with justice, this discerning age
Admires their wondrous talents for the stage:
Well may they venture on the mimick's art,
Who play from morn to night a borrowed part.

One gathers from the contemporary accounts that in the affections of their patron, Gilbert Walmesley, the ingratiating David held undisputed first place, and that Sam, a difficult and unprepossessing young man, came off only second best. It was a situation that would have left a wound, and the pain may be reflected in certain vigorously written passages:

Studious to please, and ready to submit,
The supple Gaul was born a parasite;
Still to his interest true, where'er he goes,
Wit, bravery, worth, his lavish tongue bestows. . . .
These arts in vain our rugged natives try,
Strain out with faltering diffidence a lie,
And get a kick for awkward flattery.
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Practic'd their master's notions to embrace,
Repeat his maxims, and reflect his face. . .
To shake with laughter ere the jest they hear,
To pour at will the counterfeited tear. . .
How, when competitors like these contend,
Can surly virtue hope to fix a friend?

Garrick embraced Walmesley's Whiggish notions, which Johnson's "surly virtue" rejected. Perhaps Johnson had in mind the conditions of patronage not in London, of which he had so far had little experience, but in Lichfield, of which he had had a good deal.

It is tempting to read into lines 153-156 a reference to a betrayal of confidence more subtle than Juvenalian blackmail:

They first invade your table, then your breast;
 Explore your secrets with insidious art,
 Watch the weak hour, and ransack all the heart;
 Then soon your ill-placed confidence betray. . . .

Johnson was attracted (as was everyone) by the charm which Garrick could so easily turn on; and from those whom he genuinely loved, Johnson was not in the habit of concealing his inner thoughts. But when one remembers how Garrick used to regale his friends with devastating performances of the scenes in the Johnsons' bedroom at Edial, one cannot wonder that if Johnson was ever so ill-advised as to confide in Garrick, he soon gave up the practice. Johnson's essential fondness for Garrick never died; but it is certain that, whatever intimacy Johnson may have admitted him to in their Lichfield and Edial days, Garrick was rigidly excluded from it forever after."

COMING BOOKS

As mentioned in our last number, the Yale University Press has announced for November publication the first installment of the correspondence of Walpole and Sir Horace Mann. These are volumes 17, 18, and 19 of the new edition. The editors are W. S. Lewis, Warren Hunting Smith and George L. Lam. In all, the Mann letters will comprise ten volumes. Next year, probably in the fall, two volumes of the correspondence with William Mason will be ready. The additional editors are Grover Cronin, Jr. and Charles H. Bennett. These volumes should be among the most interesting in the series.

Expected very soon is Volume 6 of the Twickenham Pope, issued in this country by the Yale University Press.

Announced for publication next spring by the Cambridge University Press is R. W. Ketton-Cremer's long-awaited biography of Thomas Gray. Although designed for the general reader rather than for the research scholar, this will probably for a long time be the standard life of the poet. Ketton-Cremer has consulted many unpublished documents, and, as a result, will be able to present a more accurate picture of Gray and his surroundings. We await the book with eagerness.

The Clarendon Press is planning an edition of the poems of Charles Churchill, to be edited by Douglas Grant.